

# The Commoner.

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THE COMMONER, Lincoln, Neb.

The tariff deformers are still in the saddle.

Democratic victories for democratic principles are won at the primaries.

The Methuen experience seems to put him in line for the prize money.

Mr. Babcock of Wisconsin seems to have exhausted himself in the prospectus.

H. Clay Evans is doubtless a convert to the proverb that "every knock is a boost."

Several good Iowa men might be found for the place soon to be vacated by H. Clay Evans.

Doubtless the president would gladly accept Mr. Reid's resignation and promise something better.

Cecil Rhodes' dream of a British empire in South Africa was a nightmare, and the dreamer never awoke.

Perhaps Mr. Hanna means that he is not willing to permit a twenty-four months' strain on his already elongated limb.

Governor Altgeld died a poor man, but he left a legacy that is not to be measured by earthly riches—an untarnished name.

It seems that the McAllister resolution performed most of its thundering in the columns of the eastern tariff and gold organs.

Those New York patrolmen seem inclined to remind us that Greater New York really elected a reform administration a few months ago.

General Funston says President Roosevelt indorsed his Lotus club speech. Some very severe things are being said about the president.

Pennsylvania republicans have been amusing themselves by discussing candidates for governor. Mr. Quay has just nominated the candidate.

General Funston's advice about standing together until the affair is over and then quarreling about it if there is any quarreling to be done, sounds familiar.

The best way to insure the triumph of democratic principles is to attend the democratic primaries and see to it that none but loyal democrats are put on guard.

The poison contained in the editorial columns of papers like the Dallas News find its antidote near at hand in the vigorous democracy of papers like the Houston Post.

The newspapers are printing a statement of the steel trust's "earnings." Every once in a while we are compelled to realize that our language is sadly deficient in some respects.

The New York World favors an income tax and Mr. Hill opposes an income tax, but they both dislike the Kansas City platform so much that they have no trouble working together.

## The Commoner.

Joseph Chamberlain refuses to talk about the alleged peace negotiations. Is it possible that Joseph is not yet prepared to admit that he yearns for it?

So the British have established a military camp near New Orleans, have they? Well, by the Eternal, they could not have done such a thing when old Andrew Jackson was president.

Major Waller justifies his conduct on the ground that his guides proved to be treacherous. This reminds us that we have given the Filipinos some expert examples of that sort of thing.

The democrats of Ohio are to be congratulated upon having a daily paper like the Columbus Press, which not only stands up for democratic principles, but ably and fearlessly defends them.

Of course democrats should "get together." There is every reason why they should do so. But it is submitted in all candor that it is much easier for the few thousand to come over than for the six million to go over.

The governor of Louisiana did not startle the country by expressing the belief that Great Britain is maintaining a military camp near New Orleans. Let's see, how far is Washington from New Orleans, anyhow?

It has not yet been decided a breach of democratic faith for six million democrats to reply to the criticism of a comparatively few members of the party who preferred republican rule to the triumph of democratic principles.

The Philadelphia Ledger says we need only small war vessels in the far east to "support military operations in the Philippines." Is it possible that the Ledger has not yet heard how lovely and serene all things are in the Philippines?

Mr. Root says the Philippine trouble is settled, and the general who would hang all who refuse to accept his dictum declares that we should all stand together until the Philippine trouble is settled. The men who never were there and the men who have been there should get together.

The Washington Post terms reasonable Mr. Morgan's statement that men of property should be allowed to manage it as they please without the interference of the man who is not even a taxpayer. But, suppose Mr. Morgan decides to use it to the injury of the man who is not a taxpayer?

The gold bugs say that the increased production of gold has killed the silver question and in saying this they admit that the quantitative theory is correct. They denounced this theory in 1896. Query: What would be the condition today but for the unexpected and unpromised increase in the supply of gold?

Mr. A. L. Woodward of Tallahassee, Fla., has an autograph letter from President Jackson and a lock of Jackson's hair which was enclosed in the letter. He also has an autograph letter from President Van Buren. He desires to sell them, and The Commoner takes pleasure in bringing the matter to the attention of the public.

Representative Babcock, who has been making such a splurge about desiring to modify the tariff, voted against an amendment to the Cuban tariff bill embodying the principle of his own proposed tariff bill. His excuse was that the amendment was a "party device." This would seem to indicate that Mr. Babcock is much more of a republican than he is a reformer.

Mr. Morgan's definition of "community of interest" means that the men who own railroads have a right to charge as much for hauling freight as they see fit to charge, and it is an attack upon "vested rights" to protest. Mr. Morgan has clearly defined the issue between the railroad managers and the people, as well as having told us what he understands "community of interests" to be.

Senator John W. Daniels writes to a constituent that he is in favor of the election of senators by direct vote of the people and will vote for the resolution now before the senate. The Commoner is glad to add his name to the number of those favorable to this reform, but this is no surprise—in fact, it would have been surprising if so firm a believer in popular government as Senator Daniels did not favor the direct election of United States senators.

Senator Penrose of Pennsylvania seems never to have read the resolutions passed by the Pennsylvania legislature in favor of the election of senators by the people, for the senator is still non-committal on the subject. He is still willing to give the matter "the consideration its importance merits," but that will not satisfy the people who desire a chance to vote on the senatorial question. The purpose of Senator Penrose's amendment is obvious. He wants to defeat the proposition, and, lacking the courage to attack it directly, seeks to load it down with unpopular amendments.

The Ninth Ward Democratic club of Jersey City, N. J., has adopted resolutions declaring among other things that "harmony and victory purchased by compromise with those opposed, not only to the form and detail, but to the very substance and spirit of the reforms for which the democracy stands today, will be victory only for its enemies." The resolution declared that the party must remain steadfast in its hostility to all forms of special privileges. These resolutions coming from the east are commended to such weak-kneed democrats of the west and south as are willing to abandon anything or advocate anything if only they are promised success.

A reader asks about the issue of bank notes. At present national bank notes are secured by a deposit of government bonds. The government holds the bonds while the notes are outstanding, the bank being allowed to issue the face value of the bonds. There is a bill now before congress called the Fowler bill which authorizes the issue of bank notes on the bank's assets. The only persons benefitted by bank notes are the stockholders of the bank. The rest of the people are taxed to pay interest on the bonds and besides that they are in constant danger because of the power of the banks to expand or contract the currency at will.

A reader of *The Commoner* suggests that it might increase the number of petitioners if some active man would take hold of the matter in each precinct and circulate a petition among his neighbors. It is a good suggestion. Many people will sign a petition who would put off until too late the writing of a separate letter. By all means circulate petitions, but it would be better still if those who are deeply interested would buy a few postal cards and take them around and urge their neighbors to use them in calling their senators' attention to the resolution submitting an amendment providing for the election of senators by a direct vote of the people.

Mr. Watterson is becoming terribly worked up about the dangers of a republican administration. It was not always thus. There was a time when he felt that a republican success was necessary to save what the financiers called "national honor and the public credit." Now he thinks that the republican administration must be defeated to save the republic and our form of government. Possibly Mr. Watterson thinks that he knows how to take the administration out of the hands of republicans merely because he helped to put it into republican hands, but he will pardon the rank and file of the party if they feel a little skeptical about putting the party under the leadership of those who so recently aided and abetted the enemy. The man on horseback would not be a menace today but for the action of the gold democrats.

A reader of *The Commoner* asks for an explanation of the initiative and referendum. The phrase is used to describe a system employed in some foreign countries, especially Switzerland, and to some extent in this country, whereby the people can, first, by petition compel the submission of a question, and, second, secure by petition a chance to vote upon a measure before it becomes effective. The initiative refers to the first process, and the referendum to the second. The system was indorsed in the last democratic national platform and has been indorsed by the democratic party in a number of states. It has been indorsed by the populist party and is advocated by most labor organizations. The principle of the referendum is already recognized by the submission of constitutional amendments, bond issues, county seat removals and other important questions, to popular vote. The initiative part of the system is also provided for on certain questions. There is a growing sentiment in favor of the application of the initiative and referendum because it protects the people from misrepresentation at the hands of their public servants and makes the government more responsive to the wishes of the people.